

## Friday, April 17, 2020 Fremont Police Department COVID-19 Operational Update

During the first month of the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place the Police Department made critical operational changes and developed policy to ensure our ability to respond to emergencies over the longevity of this pandemic. Our mission remains unchanged, and our success is a direct result of our partnership with our community. We'd like to share insight into the first 30 days of the pandemic and information about our operational changes, crime trends, a new emergency state-wide bail schedule, and how you can stay connected with Fremont PD. Above all, we want our community to know that we are here for you.

### Department Operational Changes

To ensure city-wide police service coverage while balancing the health and safety of our staff, we have implemented several staffing modifications at the police department. The first operational period for Patrol ran for 32 days and was just extended for a second cycle. Our patrol officers have been divided into four operational teams and are currently working 12-hour shifts. Officers regularly assigned to traffic, schools and some specialty assignments have been reassigned to the Patrol Division. We have also increased the number of officers working the desk to review online reports.

Police officers, community service officers and dispatchers can't do their work from home. Unfortunately, our employees are just as vulnerable as other members of the public to contracting the virus. For this reason, we've implemented operational changes intended to reduce their exposure, including expanding online reporting, phone reporting, and having officers obtain information from some victims via phone before physically collecting evidence when practical.

Additional adjustments have been made throughout the organization, including daily screening of all employees and visitors, providing essential services by appointment and a new Compliance Team to manage Alameda County Health Order inquiries and complaints. Additionally, we stood up an incident command center within the police department to ensure operational and safety needs are met. Members are also participating in several City-wide committees focused on essential services and business continuity.

### Health Order Compliance

From March 16, 2020 through April 13, 2020, the Fremont Police Department Compliance Team received 622 Health Order COVID-19 complaints, and our Dispatch Center received another 180. This average is about 28 a day. We collect inquiries from multiple sources including but not limited to; direct phone calls, email ([fremontpolice@fremont.gov](mailto:fremontpolice@fremont.gov)), patrol on-view/field contacts, calls into dispatch, referrals from the County and other outside agencies, social media (Twitter and Facebook) and anonymous tips via Nixle. Complaint trends include non-compliance with social distancing at parks, schools, non-essential businesses (usually by employees), churches and places of worship continuing to operate.

Almost all complaints received have some element of noncompliance, however we attempt to gain cooperation and compliance via education. Unfortunately, in some cases, we don't have enough information or can't immediately respond, but we attempt to follow up by contacting the Reporting Party as best we can. To date, several formal warnings have been issued, however no

citations have been written.

### Crime Trends

Since the COVID-19 Shelter-in Place was implemented, Fremont's overall crime reports have decreased, but property crimes have trended upward by approximately 30%. We are seeing spikes in commercial burglaries and auto thefts. Commercial burglary is up 133% from this period of Shelter-in-Place compared to the same period in 2019. We are averaging two per day, whereas last year it was less than one. Most of the victims are businesses and schools. Auto thefts have also risen significantly with an increase of 60% compared to this time last year. We are not seeing any significant increase in our domestic violence reports.

Our Special Operations Division is working many leads, implementing new strategies and developing new outreach efforts to prevent and disrupt these crimes. Our dedicated focus on addressing the regional auto burglary crime problem has shifted to the spikes in commercial burglary and auto theft. Our auto burglaries have been reduced by nearly half since Shelter-in-Place compared to January and February of 2020. These occurrences have shifted from commercial retail hot spots with high value losses (i.e., laptops) to scattered areas throughout our neighborhoods with minimal losses (i.e., loose change).

### \$0 Statewide Adopted Bail Rule

On Monday, April 6, 2020, the Judicial Council of California temporarily imposed an emergency statewide bail schedule. The schedule sets bail at \$0 for specified misdemeanors and felonies, effective Monday, April 13, 2020 and is in effect until 90 days after the California State of Emergency has been lifted. Most misdemeanors, with a few exceptions, and all low-level felonies will now have a \$0 bail attached in order to limit the number of arrestees coming into the jails and court system during this pandemic. The only felonies defined as "serious or violent" per Penal Codes 1192.7(c) or 667.5(c) are eligible for bail. Essentially this means, all non-serious or violent offenders will be issued a citation at the scene and provided a court date.

This new bail schedule specifically affects the ability of the department to incarcerate these offenders committing crimes such as commercial burglaries and auto thefts, the very crimes that have skyrocketed during the Shelter-In-Place. Instead of taking these criminals off the streets and stopping them from victimizing our community, officers are forced to write a citation and release them.

Chief Kimberly Petersen responded to the decision, "While we recognize the Judicial Council's zero bail schedule was intended to limit COVID exposure to court staff, and reduce the number of people in our jails, the practical consequence is that police can no longer temporarily remove a criminal offender and stop them from further victimizing others. I am concerned that removing this tool from law enforcement personnel will needlessly endanger our community members. Despite this decision, our officers continue serve and stand at the ready to protect the public."

### Community Outreach

Many of our longstanding events such as Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out, and events in support of Special Olympics have been postponed or canceled. Based on the Governor's most recent announcement of the Western States Pact, we anticipate remote engagement will be the

new norm for the foreseeable future. As long as social distancing restrictions are in place, our Department will continue to share regular updates with our community and provide opportunities for two-way dialogue. We want to ensure everyone that we are still here and available. We encourage you to visit us at [fremontpolice.gov](https://www.fremontpolice.gov) for regular updates, or connect with us on social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor) or email us at [fremontpolice@fremont.gov](mailto:fremontpolice@fremont.gov). For regular City updates on COVID-19, please visit [www.fremont.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.fremont.gov/Coronavirus).

In closing, we'd like to reiterate the Police Department values the partnership we have with our community. We are grateful to each of you for placing public health and safety ahead of all of other priorities. We know this hasn't been easy, but your efforts to shelter-at-home and physically distance are making a difference. While we look forward to a time when life feels a little more normal, we ask that you please continue to follow the Orders of our Health Officer to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19. Together, we can beat COVID-19! #FremontStrong